

¡Viva Cristo Rey!

... Calahorra. A 1 de Octubre de 1944. La noticia de la muerte de Pedro le llegó como un golpe. No se podía creer que se había ido. El hermano Juan Luis de Illacurá, el que recibí por correo, me escribió a la hora de la muerte de Pedro. Que Dios te siga bendiciendo. Yo sé porque me hacéis que vas a recibir ciertamente esta carta y en poco tiempo. Estoy destinado en Calahorra, por pedirlo yo mismo, para dedicarme al ministerio, que me parece más propio para mi vocación y hasta para mi alma. Estoy contentísimo. Acabo de predicar una Novena a San Fermín, en Pamplona; y, al terminarla, Poli me comunicó, a la mañana siguiente, que si quería ver vivo a Ignacio, que cogiera el primer tren. Efectivamente: pedí permiso al P. Provincial, que me dijo que no podía concederlo; pero, yo le contesté que me iba de todas formas, porque lo creía necesario y hasta obligatorio en conciencia. Llegué a Bilbao, a la casa de Poli, a las 10 de la noche del 26 de Septiembre y en ya le encontré a Ignacio en los preludios de la agonía. Ya había recibido los santos Sacramentos por la mañana y yo tuve el inmenso consuelo de asistirle a recibirlos, pues murió como un santo. Desde Bilbao le llevé en compañía del hermano Francisco, de los cuñados Anastasio y Vicente y de la mujer viuda. Un antrax maligno le envenenó la sangre. Por insuficiencia mental del médico, a quien venía quejándose desde hacía más de un mes; siempre le decía que eran algunos diviesos ordinarios. Las hermanas le decían que se estaba perdiendo y que se fuera a Bilbao a analizar la sangre. El Domingo 24, hizo vida casi normal, aunque quejándose muchísimo y jugando a intervalos con sus cuatro hijitos, para los que era cariñosísimo. Le puedes imaginar las escenas, al penetrar en casa a las 4 de la mañana con el cadáver; yo, para prevenir a la madre me adelanté desde Elguetxu con la viuda; pero, otro día tendré más pormenores. Sólo te diré que los hombres que le llevaban sobre una escalera lloraban como unos niños y que yo, acostumbrado a resistir el dolor, estuve sin llorar día y medio pero luego he llorado mucho. Aquellos 4 angelitos de Dios! 7 años tiene la mayor. Aquellas escenas de la Madre y de la Viuda! El espectáculo de gentes que venían a rezar por él, desde muy remotas partes y en un día de una lluvia infernal. Y en la iglesia, nunca he visto llorar a los hombres, como aquel día. Poli se quiere llevar a casa una cajita (la tercera) y Juli, también a la cajita, que es la cuarta. Económicamente están muy bien. Hay quien dice que en San Sebastián más ricos de todos los contornos y quizá de Arratia; pero es un error. Sigue miserable; pues estaba esperando a hacer una nueva casa, a que terminara la guerra, que yo creo que termina pronto con la victoria de los Estados Unidos. No será para nada difícil el hacer una vuelta en avión, sobre todo desde aquí a la península hispana, pues, según puede conjeturarse, las comunicaciones aéreas estarán muy fáciles. Cuando nos visitaras? La familia está bien económicamente. Poli sigue adelante con su negocio y tiene dos hijos que son una verdadera bendición del cielo; María, con sus hijos crecidos; Juli que sólo tiene una hija; Marcelina, tres hijos muy simpáticos; Francisco acaba de casarse. Le casé en Begoña, en el mes de Mayo último. Ha puesto negocio de leche, en que, como siempre le han ayudado Pedro y Poli. Los cuñados son muy buenos todos; sobre todo, Pedro y Vicente, que son de Poli y Marcelina. En cuanto a mí, estoy muy contento operando y haciendo a ser algo en el pulpito, si Dios quiere. Prediqué en Bilbao el Sermón radiado de Las Siete Palabras, en que quisiera ayudarte muchísimo. El destino que ahora tengo es el segundo y estoy en Castro, como vigilante, Secretario del Colegio y Profesor de todos estos años. Este año pienso una docena de Misiones. Te hebras dado cuenta de que estoy aprovechando lo posible el papel. Cuando recibas esta carta, no debes contestar inmediatamente. Escribo a tu hermano, que te te quiere y te quiere mucho. Contesta a tu hermano.

Ruega mucho por la salud de Poli, que tiene varias enfermedades: le supura el oído, le duele el hígado, el riñón y tiene frecuentes dolores de cabeza. Pedro le dice que se cuida; pero, no sé si se cuida como debe. Ya anda con los médicos; pero lo que mejor le vale es una hierba que le manda el H^{no}. Artoles. El tío Rafael ha estado también muy grave; gracias a Pedro, que le cogió en una ambulancia y se salvó por tablas del envenenamiento, como nuestro llorado hermano. Bueno, carísimo Juan Luis, no dejes de escribir por avión, porque ahora llegan muchas cartas desde Estados Unidos. Ya sabes que los Yanquis son muy sensatos y les gusta hacer las cosas bien. Por consiguiente, escribe y así tendremos el consuelo de recibir tus cartas, que esperamos como agua de mayo. Tengo en proyecto varias obritas; pero, como este año se me presenta y tanto trabajo ministerial, no puedo dedicarme a componerlas. Pide a Dios, para que me dé abundantes luces para la composición de los sermones, para los que Dios me ha dotado de algunas aptitudes. Esta es mi aspiración: dar mucha gloria a Dios y salvar muchas almas, llevando triunfante el nombre de la Congregación y el humilde apellido que hemos heredado. Soy aficionado a la foto y tengo bastantes fotografías que te las mandaré, cuando Dios quiera. Cuando me escribas, dime algo del R. Uriarte Juan José. Quisiera que nunca se interrumpiera nuestra correspondencia, ya que estamos tan separados. Leoncio, el primo, está de Secretario de Cámara del Obispo de Málaga y Víctor enseña en algunos colegios de Sevilla, con lo que gana un sueldo soberbio y superior a los mejores párrocos de la Diócesis de Vitoria. Así es que quien te hable de la situación de la familia, te diré, que, a Dios gracias, ha mejorado notablemente. Poli dividio la tienda en Ultramarinos y Perfumería. La Perfumería la ha puesto elegantísima y parece que vende mucho. Pero ya puedes rogar por la salud de Poli, que me tiene muy preocupado. Han tenido que sufrir algo por motivo de algunos nevases, que les ha obligado a tener la tienda cerrada; mas, ya creo que no les sucederá más cosas tan dolorosas, pues han acudido ya a Madrid en la última vez y han salido con bien por ahora. Lo más interesante es que nuestros sobrinos MARL y TERE y el PACHITO son muy buenos, simpáticos, serviciales, cariñosos y de mucha doctes, por lo que tanto a una como al otro tienen amistades selectas y son apreciados por todos los que los tratan. María se ha defendido, además del negocio sencillo que se le derivaba del sueldo de Miguel, con el cine de Galdácano, que han tenido en compañía de otro hasta el presente año; no sé si seguirán en lo sucesivo, porque han de renovar el contrato este invierno. Juli se ha dedicado a la compra-venta de casas, donde parece que ha hecho algún negocio. María ha puesto una tienda en Bilbao, con la ayuda principal de Poli, que está bastante bien. Francisco está colocado en el Ayuntamiento de Bilbao como cobrador de aguas, con un sueldo de unas 6.000 pts. y además ha puesto un negocio de lechería, que parece bonito negocio. Ruega, por todos. La muerte de Ignacio ha sido sentida en toda la familia. Nunca hubiese creído cosa igual. En cuanto a las noticias de la Congregación te diré que el P. Lazcano, que tanto me aprecia, sigue superior de Castro, Consultor Provincial y Prefecto Provincial de Estudios. Creo que llegará al Gobierno General. Hay en la Provincia 6 colegios de Segunda Enseñanza; Zamora, Ujón, Las Arenas, Castro, Aranda y Segovia, todo ello obra del P. Lazcano casi. Nos ofrecen otros varios colegios que se rechazan por falta de personal. También así, si queréis abrirlos camino, lo mejor sería que hicierais colegios de S. E. o vosos.

Recibe, querido Juan Luis un fortísimo abrazo de este tío hermano que tanto te quiere y ruega mucho por mí, para que sea un gran Apostol de Cristo. Contesta a tu hermano,

José de Almaraz

Sunday — Oct. 1st ^{Postmark}
^{Oct 3-1944}

Dearest Father,

I think you had better pray hard if you want me to finish your picture — the first coat is on and I think it's lovely — if the final coats are as good, and I don't see why they shouldn't be, our lady and her sweet baby are bound to fill hearts with love and adoration when they look at them — at present their expressions are beautiful — I am very sick again — too sick and weak even to go to mass this am. — Last Wednesday I think our Lord decided to crucify me, probably for my negligence. The pain in the five places was so great I tossed and moaned all night and kept awake. I slept a little but frequently woke from moaning — Thus am I, I had a sore throat since then I have been so weak that I would faint if I tried to keep up — perhaps I'll get my strength back in a day or two — Father, this is like I used to be in the convent — I hope my pen will not make me that way

again — I hope my apt. will be finished
next week so I can move into it then
I hope I can think more of God — I don't
like the way I am living — if well
enough I shall return to the sea next
Sat. — The Supt. says both patients and
nurses are unmanageable since I left — they
had to fire the nurse who took my
place — the only thing is that I treat
nurses and pts. like humans, then
I have peace and order — it is so easy
to manage those poor people. —

I hope our dearest Lord is keeping
you in every way — I beg him day
and night to favor you in every way
with his divine love and to fill your
heart and mind with his wisdom
and love — all is easy when one
loves — at least much easier and
more bearable — I often think of poor
Job — how God tried him & how slight
our troubles are in comparison —
some things seem so hard to bear at
the time, especially if the day is cloudy
and we don't feel well but how our

troubles melt away when God's blessed
sunshine peeps out and our digestion
track is clear - we make so many
of our own troubles thru ignorance
and carelessness - I don't know why
I'm so sick now - I'm really not sick
just terribly weak - Now Sister well
Father - Mrs. T. just came to my
room - I planned on moving into
the new apt - she's asking \$30 for it
but she wants me to move in to
her bedroom which, she says I can
have - Truly don't want to live with
her - I want to be alone - only God
knows how much I want to be alone
but I know and feel she is afraid I'll
be sick and unable to pay for it
she likes to have her own house
to herself & she would be making a
great sacrifice to give her room up
to me - so beg God with all your
heart to give me strength to work so
I can't take that apt. and live here
for one year - or beg God to take
me home now - after all, that is

all I live for and I am of very little
use in this world — I could do so
much more were I in heaven when
I could be profuse with the riches
of my heavenly spouse — Mrs D.
is lovely to me — but I'll never be per-
fectly free with her — I don't know
just how to take her all the times — &
now she is faced with a \$3500 mortgage
for the new work — she must go to
work — she has a large inheritance coming
but so far she cannot get it — she is very
easily moved & she is very timid. she needs
kindness and friendship and love but I
don't want to live in such close quarters
with her — for her sake, as well as my own
we are better with a little space between
us — she loves her home & I love mine
& for my soul's sake I want to be alone for
one year — I entered the convent on Oct. 4.
1906 — almost 40 years ago how time flies
one should have a fortune both in heaven
and on earth in that length of time —
but how little I have accumulated for heaven
or earth — I know I shall never be rich here

below — but how truly you have spoken
dear father when you said I must hurry
because I am so near the end of the journey.

It is now evening — a short time
ago my father told me I am weak because
I have not taken him into my heart since
Wednesday he wants me to understand
how utterly helpless I am without him
the other night when I was in such
agony he spoke to my soul and one
of the things he told me was that
when I am overcome with such utter
exhaustion I should remember his last
fall beneath the cross because it was
that deathlike weakness that overcame
him when he fell he wanted me to
know that I feel just as he felt in
that last fall so I could suffer with him

now am —

I must send this to you father because I need
your prayers so badly — I am still too weak
to stay up — beg our dearest Lord to give
me strength — & beg God to guide me what
to do — Mrs. D. is so worried — your prayers
get things straightened out for me & her — tell our father
duly & gratefully & humbly many

P.O. Box 644, Palms Sta. - La. 34 - Calif.

Sat. Oct. 7 - 44

Dearest Father,

It seems so long since I have seen you - this is my second day out of bed but as I promised to help at the sac. again for a few weeks, I had to come tonight - so many things have happened since I left - it does not seem possible that so many should die & so many changes should be made - only God is unchanging! I have nothing special to tell you - excepting that I do not like the way I am living ^{but} that is always the way when one becomes part of the family - the year will slip by quietly then if I still live I am giving myself more wholly to God - perhaps I am selfish but I do like to be all alone - all alone with God and Jack - that is I do not like to live with others, where one must cater to the others wishes - I like to be quiet & dream - Mrs. B. is absolutely wonderful to me in every way - but Father, I lived too many years in silence in a cell - I like to talk & visit but I like my evenings wholly to myself

They God to inspire you boys with great
love and charity and unbounded trust and
confidence in God - Who was it that used
to say, "love and do as you please" was it
St. Augustine, who ever it was was surely
right because one cannot love God and
do anything wrong - Love surely rules the
world as well as heaven - the greatest achievements
^{in this world} have been brought about thru love and
and the greatest works of God have love
as their foundation -

Father will you please return Dr. Keweenaw's
letter in enclosed envelope - I've got
so much to dispose of if she is really
not going to do anything - and I want
to read it once more - I hate to
part with all my things but can no
longer keep them in storage -

Please pray hard for me - I
truly need your holy prayers - you
are so good - and I am less than nothing
and pray for Dorel she is in the
midst of great temptations
Until I see you Good night
Dear Father and May our Sweet Mother
and her holy babe keep you in every way

may
any
way
you
humbly

I guess it's because I get very tired — Some of these days — perhaps things will change for the better — Mrs. D. is going ahead with the shop & she is renting her big bedroom to me — I guess it will be better —

Must our dearest Lord is keeping you father — often I cannot pray specially for you at 9 o'clock but my thoughts are with you and your boys & I beg our dearest Lord to help you — there are many times one just needs to forget self to be carried away by the great love of God — Would that many of us Catholics possessed ^{so} the magnificence of Anne McPherson — She had her faults and shortcomings but she also possessed a great spirit that drew others to God — Truly God in his infinite mercy will take all this into consideration they just get off on the wrong track and they set in good faith. I have found great honesty and charity among non-Catholics so much so that it should put Catholics to shame — So many Catholics try to cover their shortcomings with a cloak of religion —

Tues Night 7.30

Prithwick
Oct-4-1944

your picture is beginning to look lovely

Fr. Dear, Thank you so much for your prayers
I could not go to mass this am. but I began
to get better about 10 am. I am getting
a ~~little~~ weak now, the first time today
so I thank you - only I hope you did not
have to suffer for me - you know
I would not want that - I am
not moving into apt. I am just
going to fix up my old room & stay
in it - I would like to see you
but do not know when I can
get over. I'll return to San. on
Sat. then I may take a job at the
hospital - I have a job here if I
want it - at least the Dr. says so.

Please Pray for Mrs. D. - she
needs prayers very badly - there
is little doing in my home - I think
my Jesus sleeps - how I wish - many
things - Keep on praying - May our
divine Master shower his favors upon you
I humbly beg you to pray for me your
unworthy maid

I have been for some time
 thinking of writing to you
 but have been so busy
 that I could not find time
 to do so. I am now
 in the hospital and
 am getting on well.
 I hope to be home
 soon. I will write to
 you again when I am
 home. I am very
 fond of you and hope
 to see you soon.

Oct 5, 1944

Dear Father Alayans,
How good God has been to me - it
being to me! In all my life so much grace has never
been given, nor so abundantly, nor so fast.

Through you He has filled my soul to overflowing.
I can only think how suddenly free I am - so
utterly free of attachments, of all things - free to move
+ live + pray in God, wrapped + soaked in the
blood of my Saviour. I've never been so happy, nor
so confident - so sure + safe. Thank you,
Father, from the bottom of my poor heart + please
thank + praise God for me.

I am afraid, because of your humility, some
of the things I am going to say won't please you.
But please understand that at all times I am
aware that you are God's instrument + that
without Him you would have very little to
give me. I bless + thank Him that you allowed
Him to do with you as He willed - beyond that
I give all credit to Him. This being so, please
let me tell you what He let you do for me
+ rejoice with me + pray that I not ever
again falter nor fail.

As I talked to you + listened to you
Tuesday my soul began to open + expand to His
love. I was at perfect peace + I learned many
things - things that I now apply - things that help

me to run rather than crawl. I feel like St. Theresa's butterfly. I feel as though I "hatched out" Tuesday + the wings of Gods grace have spread out wide + have carried me to His outstretched arms. There, I rest in complete satisfaction, in silence + burning love. I live + breathe, eat + sleep, pray + do penance - not I but Christ in me. I have Him to offer God, Him to do my loving + praying, Him to suffer for me.

That picture you sacrificed to give me, Father, was a great grace to me. I've never had such an experience as I get gazing into those Eyes. They hold me spellbound + break my heart with love + contrition + desire to suffer for Him. I feel that I robbed you, but I also want you to know what your sacrifice purchased for me.

Then Father I must tell you what happened to me in confession. When you began to talk I heard you all the way through. One or two things I remember, the rest I do not remember. I was clinging tightly to the little sill + all that I can say is that God united Himself to me so closely that I was in heaven. Waves of love for Him, waves of pain because of that love, complete abandonment, were all mine. Afterwards I knew that in some secret way that I did not understand God had strengthened my soul + done a great deal for it. The penance that you gave me is such a great consolation that I need only remember it + direct my intention

to call Our Lord right into my heart. It is so sweet a thing that I often protest to Him that this is not penance but entire joy. And then, when you blessed my corporal penance with obedience at that moment again I was free of another shackle, another fear + another hinderance. The devil knew his battle on that was over + so did

I.

It is all so perfectly obvious to me that God has enlightened you completely about my soul that my confidence in Him + in you are unbounding. I want with all my heart to give you the most perfect, the most explicit obedience + I ask that you give me every opportunity to practice it. I want obedience - full + running over. Obedience to God's will - obedience to you as His voice in my regard.

This letter may sound like the outpourings of an "excitable" nature, but none-the-less I've never felt like this before - never, and you can rest in the consolation that your efforts + your sweet charity have born great fruit.

Father, I have been trying to decide something + I'll leave it up to you. I want to come back next Tuesday because of the wealth of grace I feel is there for me. There will be many times I may not be able to come so often. On the other hand not to come would be so great a mortification that I'd like to deny it to myself, + I am not sure I should choose a mortification of that

sort. I suppose I'm a spiritual glutton but I've been thinking that if I could go to Confession to you every morning before breakfast I'd be a saint in about two weeks. What God did to me there I can't help but want again if He wills it.

I'm going to do this - call you Saturday or Sunday + say, "shall I come?" If you say "yes" it will give me time to mail my note-book, (although so far there is little in it that I have not told you here). If you advise against it I will accept it as God's will as I truly don't know what He wants me to do. You will know.

Please take my soul in your priestly hands and as a priest + as my spiritual father offer me entire to God as His victim. Father Madden has done it both in the Mass + outside of it because I begged him so hard to do it. You will understand even better + I am sure will not refuse me. I'm poor + weak + very sinful, but my whole will + desire are set on being one day entirely united to my Divine Spouse. More than that I desire to suffer for Him + to be like Him even to His death on the Cross.

Bless me + help me thank God for His goodness to me, + then believe me when I say I am humbly + obediently entirely your child in God.

Agnes.

Tuesday Eve -

Oct 12 - 1944

My Father in Christ -

Tonight I could write + write to you until all the paper in the world was used up, if I didn't first become exhausted.

When I saw you this morning my soul was in desolation + in an agony of longings for God. On top of that, (as is always the way), my understanding seemed especially clouded + my will very weak. I seem to walk, at such times, under a very heavy cloud. There is nothing to do about it but endure patiently + I almost regretted having bothered you since I was such a very dumb ox. I had made the appointment so kept it regardless, but I did feel it was no time to go seeking light. None the less I tried to profit by what you had said + to remember it. While there my soul remained quite dormant + unresponsive, but during my drive home I "chewed" the food you had given me. I prayed + meditated all the way home + when I arrived I was very tired. I tried to rest but my mind went on "chewing" in spite of me. Later I wrote a bit in my note book + before I was through I felt my soul unfolding again to the warmth + love of a dear Presence. Later I went to church

to pray +, ah Father, that hour was very wonderful.
During it came the certain knowledge - knowledge
more sure than any spoken word - that I was
to be the spouse of Christ in a special way. It's the
first time I've ever had that knowledge from Him; before
it has been only faith. My soul flew into His heart
+ rested + prayed there - abandoned, secure, without
fear nor worry. And I asked Him to adorn His
bride as He would have her adorned - with every
virtue. To clothe her with Himself so that I might
glorify God in absolute union with Him.

I don't quite understand why, Father, but at
such times I also pray in union with you, for
your intentions + with you. The very thought
of you + the things God has done for you make
me love Him more. Often it is the little
breeze that fans the smoldering coal to a white
hot flame of love.

I've thought a lot about the great grace God
has given you + have thanked + praised Him
for it. Would I be presuming if I made
a little comparison? He has given you His
Sacramental Presence. To me, in so much a
less degree, He has given an appreciation of His
Sacramental grace in the Sacrament of Penance.

In all the sacraments, true, + by faith
primarily in the Eucharist. But my special
grace has been through penance - the virtue
+ the sacrament. And it is as it should
be. To you, His pure of heart, He comes
+ makes of you His Tabernacle. To my mind
no greater grace nor token of affection could

He give you. To me, this poor, ragged, ashamed little sinner comes an appreciation of the sacrament that has washed + healed her; + to love + thank Him more for His great mercy she begs to be soaked + covered by that saving blood so that she may constantly be doing perfect penance before God's Throne for herself + for others. That never came out of a book, but from the Holy Spirit Himself. Penance + love! It has been my mark for sometime now. The desire to atone coupled with so much love ~~is~~ is much, much less penance than love. My very penance is my love - my whole pain is love + caused only by love. Corporal penance is nothing more or less anymore except a hopeless gesture to, by the exterior pain, ease the interior. And, as I say, it's getting pretty hopeless. It's a mere toy compared to the pain love causes, either in its sense of loss + desolation or by its very heat.

Oh Father, I can write to you like this in perfect freedom + know I am understood. The very writing is a prayer. There are times when I am so beside myself that to write like this is some small relief. You have given me so much. You have reached up + pulled away the cob-webs + the mists + have let in the sun. Afraid of you? I've never been less afraid of anyone!

You did something else this morning for me.

you put me under obedience not to admit any fears or worries. Did you know that a very nasty one almost had the best of me + that I longed to tell you + yet the telling, as yet, is beyond my human weakness? It's only a nasty temptation anyhow + out it went when obedience came in + out it stays. As I have recorded in my note-book, I intend using my vow of obedience more to calm my fears + give peace to my soul than any other reason. It is not to add new scruples but to lay the ones I have. In one day's time it has "whipped" years of upsetting worries. With every power of my will I united myself to all your hopes for me to all your desires + offered myself together with the Divine Victim when you would offer me with Him. I will that offering with every power I have, Father, + most humbly, but made courageous by love, I would creep right inside your chalice + draw my soul in His precious blood.

To live in Christ, with Christ is all the glory I ever wanted in my mildest moments. It is too sublime a vocation to even whisper + God is giving it to me + my joy + thanksgiving + adoration is burning my heart asunder.

Yes, I can write + express myself, + what better way to use a God given talent than like this. That very talent refuses to act except its subject is God. Some of the saints wrote poetry - I'm no saint + no poet but I understand the

urg. This is my poetry - this, + prayer. This is the outpourings of my soul - the overflow of the "water" as St. Teresa would say.

Now I am so tired that I must rest, because it is prudent, because I have obedience to you + you said, "rest!" I'll write you more tomorrow + for now thank you - oh thank you!

Wednesday Eve, Oct 11 -

It is now just 24 hours since I finished the above + only a few hours since I have been again left to myself. It never ceases to amaze me the difference there is - the gulf - between our souls when God moves them + holds them and what we can do of ourselves. The space is in all truth, infinite!

I want not bore you nor sadden you by a tale of woe. I have put all that behind me + with God's grace I'll not whine, nor complain, + under obedience I may not worry. So what is left me to say? I know I must endure these things + often in consolation I am shown the desolation + asked if I will bear it for love of Him, + a joyful "Yes" bursts from my heart. But I will say this, it is worse than I can imagine beforehand and it takes all my time + breath, all my prayers + energy to keep from rejecting the cross. Whether it is true or not I always

have the feeling that if I refuse I'll be quite
happy again. Of course it is a vivid temptation
+ you must pray I never fall for it. My
only answer to that is that I do not wish
happiness, but the Cross!

you've seen little of the suffering Agnes +
indeed she has suffered - so little in comparison
to Christ, but, then, Agnes is so little also. This
getting bigger because she is becoming more
Christlike, but with Blessed Angelo Faligno
I can only say "The wood of the Cross is rough
and it hurts!" Then, there is suffering and
suffering. Suffering - no matter how severe -
born sensibly with Our Lord is not suffering
but real joy. It's the suffering of soul that
descends like the blackest night with the feeling
of loss, of abandonment, almost of damnation,
that makes me reel + reach out for a drop of
comfort. As I said, I renounced that comfort
when I came to you. You said I was a
spiritual baby + indeed I am. But I let
you know some other "babies" when the
dark night strikes them down + shows them
their own nothingness + dependance on God.
Christ Himself sought comfort in His agony
+ surely He does not censure a poor weak
soul like mine.

But never mind, it will pass again
+ if it doesn't "Fiat" you should be
allowed to see my soul at times like this

4.

to make an honest appraisal. You are my father
+ to hide my wounds from you would not be
courage, but pride.

I pray constantly for you + am consoled
so much by the thought that you pray for me.
Your prayers have brought me so much. In all
my agony of tonight I am really at perfect
peace + full of confidence. If I could only
go to the Bl. Sacrament I'd find rest, but that I
cannot do. At times like this I long for His
Sacramental Presence so much. I find comfort
there even when I can't seem to pray. The very
fact I go to Him there + kneel + ache seems to be
prayer enough. He seldom gives me consolation
but I'm always stronger.

If I write anymore I'll only write more
gloom, so until I have more cheerful news
I'll simply thank you again + ask that you
not forget me where it counts the most.

Sincerely + obediently in Our Lord

Agnes.

Postmark Oct. 18 - 1944

Tuesday Night.

Dear Father,

Thank you Father for this afternoon. I think I left you with the impression of being very unhappy + having the "long face" you so detest. Yes, I wasn't very radiant. But the grace of the sacrament brought peace, slowly to be sure, but it did come. Also the things you said sunk in slowly through the dense fog that enfolds me.

Please, please, Father forgive me for my tears + the way I seemed to resist you. Before God I am sure I am guilty of nothing but an agony of suffering. It's easy to brush it all aside + say "smile, be cheerful", "abandon yourself" ect., but that is theory, + good theory, practical sound spiritual advice that I have taken to my heart + will apply. But I am far from perfect + I have to struggle to control myself + to maintain my peace. It isn't easy + our dear Lord Himself has taken from me all human consolation except yourself + we are not very old friends yet. You, with the sensible "God in you" can brush all these things aside + say "What matter"? But Father, I'm just a little soul plunged in darkness + anguish + these things matter very much to me. I gave them up gladly because God asked it, but it still hurts + I miss it + I'm very, very lonely. So lonely I think I'll die of loneliness a thousand times a day.

When God took away He also gave + very generously. I see that, I know it + right now I'm even confused with it. So confused I'm not

quite used to it.

I tried to tell you something today + you either didn't hear me or pretended not to, + I lost my courage. Here it is - I know that God at times allows you to visit + console your spiritual children. After one such visit from you it scared me so I asked you not to do it again. I repent of that, from my heart. I needed you yesterday + you knew it - you may have known it sooner. This sounds so silly, I suppose, but next time you know please forget I ever said it frightened me.

The last few minutes in the parlor today the Devil came in all his fury + tempted me terribly. I felt I couldn't go on - that I didn't want to. I wanted to just get up + walk out. That was what was the matter with me, so again forgive me behavior.

When I returned to Pasadena today I went directly to my own church + favorite spot before the Blessed Sacrament + I found the first peace in many days. Not consolation - just peace. It was as though the tight steel bands that have bound my soul loosened a bit + let me relax. They didn't cut + bind so severely + best of all that awful interior agitation was gone. That's what is driving me mad - that agitation. Please ask God to continue to let me relax in His hands so I can abandon myself. Abandonment takes peace + relaxation. Taught nerves + muscles can't "abandon themselves".

There in church I just quietly loved loved Him + gave Him myself all over again + I used my favorite prayer once more - St. Ignace's Scurfew. On that prayer - on its philosophy, I have built

my spiritual life for years, & ² it is always back to that I turn. If I ever attain to the fullness of God it will be because I have fallen & failed only to rise again & say, "Take all, O Lord - give me only Thy love & grace I could not ask for more". I think anyone could use that one prayer to explain the whole spiritual life. It's all there - every step - if we know what to look for. My first mystical grace was given me the first time I really got myself to say it & mean it. After bitter rebellion & heavy suffering I finally gave in & on a bed racked with sickness & pain & disappointment I said my "Suscipe" & asked for the sacraments. That night Our Lord Crucified came & stayed over the upper corner of my bed for over two days & nights. It was there at His feet I laid all my sins & was pardoned - it was there I learned what love I have of His cross. It's there I asked that I might suffer with Him & for Him. It was then my invitation came to be a saint. I didn't understand all this then as I do now. I only knew He was there & didn't dare tell anyone. I finally told the little secular who attended me & he knew me so well & was so intelligent he believed me but wasn't sure of it all for many months afterwards. You see he watched me closely & I didn't know I was being watched until long afterwards he told me. I thought he was only very, very, kind. He brought me daily Communion & usually came again for a visit. Odd, how God works, as when I definitely wanted nothing but a contemplative life the same priest washed his

hands of me + said I was making a mistake. The parted friends, but we do not agree.

I thought you might like that story + that knowing it you might recommend me more ardently to our Crucified Lord. I also know you have no ordinary love of the Crucified. I am hoping someday God will grant me the grace of having you tell me about it. I'm not worthy of it, nor am I exactly curious, but I am ready.

The experience I told you of above was not a vision that I saw. I felt Him, knew He was there + the experience of love was so great I could neither sleep nor eat. I could only pray. I was not afraid - not at all - I was happier than I've ever been. That vision came at the beginning of my spiritual life, not later.

This evening before the Blessed Sacrament this thought was given me - to rest secure in God's Arms + when the devil tormented me too greatly to tell you through the Blessed Sacrament + it would be relayed, + that you, by your prayers, would come to my aid. So I made a compact with the Blessed Sacrament to ask Him there to help me through you, + I think He wants it that way. You are only as far from me as the Blessed Sacrament is. Do you see what I mean?

I'm better, much better, but it's going to be very hard + very terrible - I know that. So please, in charity, I beg of you pray for me. Save me by your prayers + obtain the strength for me to endure this terrible anguish calmly. Ask for me peace + calm - I can do it with those two things. I have the love, but, of course, I need + want more.

Tell our Crucified Love that I want only to please Him & to be very close to Him. Tell Him I'm not ungenerous but oh so weak & my insides get so excited.

In His wounded Heart, beneath His nailed feet, humble, contrite & loving, I turn to you there & say, "Father, protect me by your prayers, ask His grace & strength for me. He'll hear your prayers because I am your child. You have a power by your priesthood & your spiritual fatherhood that He cannot resist. He gave me to you most certainly & He'll finish what He began."

I feel that in some way I displeased you today. If so, humbly I ask your pardon. More than that I cannot do. I'll try to be good & stay home for awhile. If you really want me to, you can also get that grace for me from God. I'll promise you to try - whether or not I succeed remains with God.

God bless & keep you & reward you for your sweet charity & your strong, vibrant, living direction - direction that works.

Agnes.

October 19, 1944.

My Father -:

Since you so "enjoy" my letters I will do another "act of charity"!

I have something to tell you + I'm half fearful of the telling for fear I will say what is not quite true or mislead you in some way. Well, I'll let the Holy Ghost take care of all that after I've done the best I can. I believe that picture you gave me that you got from Mrs. Brennan is miraculous for me. Before I go further let me tell you that such a statement from me is quite a bit. I'm something of a skeptic about such things. Oh, I believe they happen to good people, + more often than is commonly thought. But never before have I ever even thought they happened to me. I'm about as unsuperstitious as is possible.

Ever since I saw you - thanks to your prayers - steadily grace has built up to a positive crescendo today. I wish I felt equal to copying bits from my note-book for you, but to put it briefly there has been an intense continuous state of quiet with moments of more - possibly imperfect union, or very quick + short lived moments of complete union. Several times I have lost my breath under the intensity + several times I felt like I was going to lose all my senses. For quick moments I may have.

Now for the picture. This afternoon I was saying
my office + having trouble doing so because of the
passive prayer in my soul. So I would stop from
time to time to lose myself in God. Your picture
is in my office book + I often just sit + look at
it + it produces deep contemplation. No picture
ever has before - I am not one of the people who
gets much out of pictures, even in my imagination;
- that kind of "picture meditation" I have never
been able to use at all. In fact, all the formal
equation, or any other kind, of meditation I have
ever done wouldn't fill a half-hour of my whole
life. So ever since I first saw this picture I've
known it had special grace for me. To day
as I sat + looked at Christ's Eyes, (it's the
eyes that have fascinated me from the start), they
looked back. Deep, + yet deeper into my soul
they looked with all of the love + the longing
+ the sadness of a God suffering His passion
of love. I can't tell you, Father - there are no
words to describe what I felt in the depths of
my soul. And I stayed riveted there for over
a half-hour. Did the eyes move? No, I
looked for movement, but still they were quite
certainly alive. I could have perhaps imagined
that, but I did not imagine what happened inside
me. There were times when I had to close my eyes
as I could not bear what I saw - the infinite, tender
love - the pleading. I cannot describe to anyone
what I said to him, the response in my own
soul, but I think you can well imagine.

It has not frightened nor upset me - there is
only calm, quiet, prayerful peace + complete

abandonment. I am tired tonight from all the interior intensity - so tired I could be very irritable, but that is tired nerves because if I can be ^{by} myself I'm at peace with the world.

I have no doubt if this picture is in anyway miraculous it is because Our Lord Himself blessed it. You see, I've never doubted that He did for an instant. I also have a Sacred Heart badge that Mother Gabriel gave me blessed for a mystic priest in Chicago by Our Lord. She told me his story which I find most beautiful & consoling. You no doubt know him also. He's the young secular that the devil was allowed to scare into a life of deep penance who now is often drenched in the blood of his Crucifix. Very suddenly of late God has brought such things closer to my life. Before they were remote - I knew no one who had such favors nor anyone who actually knew others. In the last two months one thing after another has happened & I am accepting it perfectly simply. I must have been ready for it as it isn't my nature to.

Before I close I wish I could tell you one-tenth of the love in my soul. God has infused every last tiny drop of it & all day I have taken it & offered it right back to Him, only to be given more. That's often all it is, isn't it? The soul receives & gives back until it becomes only the instrument of the Holy Ghost - a sacred board of love, or an altar upon which the little tongues

of fire (the Holy Ghost) burn + dance + mount up higher + hotter with each leap until the altar is part of the fire.

I have felt your prayers + so often I have been moved to praise, adore + thank God for His gifts to you. Often in the morning I hear your Mass in spirit + often you are very close to me after Holy Communion + that seems most reasonable, doesn't it, as it is the one moment of the day that I, too, hold within my heart the Creator + Redeemer of us both?

So now, you can think, if you like, that your little penitent had a nice little hallucination over her picture, but it still does the same thing + I have to put it aside as flesh + blood can only stand just so much - not only that, but my family is all around me + has free access to me at every moment. I don't dare let myself go.

Please ask Our Blessed Lord that I not waste all His precious graces to me - that I keep perfectly every beautiful promise that I made Him when we looked deep in each others' eyes this afternoon. Ask Him that I always love Him like that, even when it's night + I can no longer remember what He's really like, ask Him that even so I continue to love with a love stronger than death, with a love that welcomes death - even the death of the Cross. Oh Father that's how I want to love Him + He knows how I fail, but He also knows how I will to succeed. Then too, I also know that it all depends on Him, every prayer, every spark of love, every smallest

act. Complacency dependant on Him & hope for all the impossible things - perfect sanctity & union with Christ, forever. Yes, even Agnes - Agnes the sinner - Agnes whose hands have been guilty of every drop of His blood. He has loved her enough to wash her in that same blood & to even bid her hope for sanctity. It's a big order, but no bigger than God! At times like this I feel so miserably inadequate to love enough. I'm wearing myself out with love, I feel consumed with love, & yet I still have not loved as I would love.

In the depths of His Sacred Heart,

Agnes.

J.M.J.
A.M.D.G.

846 St. 43 St.
Los Angeles, Calif.
Oct. 21, 1944

Father Aloysius
Hernandez Seminary
Compton, Calif.

Dear Rev. Father,

I am very sorry to have delayed imparting the news to you, but I was so deeply touched by the humiliation and trouble I caused you that I could not make myself mail the three letters I wrote you at different times.

With the help of our Lord, I promise to never again conduct myself as I seemed to have done that day, or speak such ugly words to my husband. I am definitely cured of many evil ways since that day. Of course it will take time and practice

to be exactly the way I should be, but it will be done. My Lord was displeased with me and I would rather die than hurt Him. Please pray for me.

The girl came to see me last Wednesday. I rather, I believe she is just a pretty, conceited, fallen away Catholic, who has been keeping company with men since she was fourteen or less. She has been engaged to a young man for four years and intends to marry ^{him} in the future. She said that her name was connected with two other married men where my husband works - that she jokes and talks ^{a great deal} with them during working hours. It seems that all the women scold her for such attitude but she says she means no evil and continues to carry on.

I talked kindly to her and may have awakened her in regards

to religion. She departed with tears in her eyes and a promise to visit the Sacraments over the week-end.

Father, I would be sorry to lose you as a director but if you think it advisable I should want to do as you wish. I never could stand to be the cause of any reflections on your good, holy name, believe me. I also intend to never again bring women out there. Please advise me by mail as to what you ^{think} I should do.

I sincerely pray that you are well, and that the Holy Ghost has given you all of His wonderful gifts.

Most humbly,

Mrs. Locca

Fri. 1 am.

marked
Oct 23 - 1944

My dearest Father, I just finished reading "Little
Rose" before I came on duty - how utterly different
we are - she was so very beautiful - how
dear and how close she must have
been to God - I have often felt that
there are many who would reach a
closer union with ^{God}, if they only had
some one to help them along the way -
so few priests are willing and many
who are willing do not understand
It is hard to enter into a subject
so abstract - unless one also has had
a kiss from our dearest Lord - that
is something one can never forget -
those priests are able and capable of
leading a soul closer & closer to God -
I know that I would be very much
closer to God if I had of had the right
kind of help or if I had told my confessor
when I was a youngster & also during

my novelties. It is a pity to crush
budding virtue because when one is
young, one is very strong and generous,
it is so much harder as one grows
older - One time, by accident, the librarian
gave me Santa Sophia, by Mr. Baker, I believe
I was enjoying it immensely, because it
was the first time I ran across anything
that resembled my own soul - One afternoon
I was speaking to my mistress and I said,
Lieke Meister, I am so happy you let
me have Sta. Sophia, because it is
just ^{until then} like my soul all written in a
book - I thought I was crazy but now
I know that others are like I am -
she scolded me & told me to go & get
that book & give it to her - I had
enough nonsense in my head without
reading more & imagining that I was talking
to God & the saints - she took the book
away scolded Dr. Anthony & told her never
to give me anything like that again - how much

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it is so much harder as one grows
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that book & give it to her - I had
enough nonsense in my head without
reading more & imagining that I was talking
to God & the saints - she took the book
away scolded Dr. Anthony & told her never
to give me anything like that again - how much

better it would have been to take me
by the hand & lead me closer & closer
to God - I was very generous then but she
did not understand how my soul craved
and longed for God - Father, I am so far
from what you think I ~~am~~ ^{am}. Some day
I think I am going to write my life for you,
only you, my own dear brother, then ^{when}
you reach the end tear it up and
say dearest Lord have mercy on her soul
and forgive her - She wants to love
you so much but something is wrong
she just does not know how - however, I will
tell you, that this much you will learn,
how infinitely ^{good} God has been to me &
what a wonderful imagination he
gave me - In the secret depths of
my soul I believe I would love to shine
before others, to have them think
me very good just to get attention
^{which is a very serious fault}
AT then if anyone does think me good
I realize what a hypocrite I am & how little
I deserve it and I want to crawl into the

darkest corner and weep over my sins
I tell you dearest father I am just a
very queer combination of good and bad
It hurts so terribly to know I love God
so poorly. I long to know and love him
with my whole heart. I would go to the
deepest hell to find him if I could -
I cannot refuse him anything because
he is my God, (but I am a glutton. I enjoy
Isabel's good meals so much) and I have
so many, many faults - at this stage
of my life I should be extremely mortified
I sometimes think I write you just to make
you think well of me & then when I
think you do think well of me I am
frightened - and want to tell you how
awfully bad I am - so what can I do
with this poor worthless person - who is me?
I throw myself into the arms of God's infinite
mercy and I am just overcome by his love
I lie like a baby in his arms because I
am so utterly helpless and dependant
on him - my soul is drawn out

it hurts. I want to embrace the whole world
to draw all souls into his sacred heart.
I talk to him and plead with him and
beg him to have pity on his children
to make himself known to them just a little
bit — father it is more than I can ^{stand}
then I tell him to take me and do what
he will with me only to spare others
and have pity on their souls — I am
waiting for him to come back but if I never
have that happiness again then all
I can say is, his holy will be done — he
knows best and I know I deserve nothing
but his anger for my many sins!
yet, ah, father I forget my sins because I love
him so much, I forget everything for the time
being and become lost in him — I wish I
could be a hermit — or just live alone
with Jack in a little house and a garden
where I would be able to go in at appointed
times and talk to my Jesus — I guess I do not
like crowds & I do not like living with other
people — Probably I'm just plain queer — or
selfish —

Sat. ² Aug.

I brought gemma over to the sea. and just picked
a page at random — it was all about the
way the old boy used to torment her — what
a demon he is and how grateful one
should be when peace reigns in the soul.
I have never had much to do with him
but I do know him well enough that I
prefer he remains at a civil distance.
He started tormenting me when I was a
little youngster by frightening me but
my dear good angel always keeps me he
has kept it up all my life time but my
angel always seems to be handy and helps
me when I fall upon him — one way he
has tortured me terribly is by telling me
that Maria's soul is lost and in hell
and I have put her there — this is almost
more than I can bear and all I can do is
to recommend her to God's mercy. I am afraid
I would go insane were I to think too much
of this — I know that the devil does it to destroy
my soul. to make me distrust God — there
is so much to contend with when that
demon gets busy — I would like to write

and tell you many things dear father
but I cannot keep awake - I want to doze
all the time and I am so tired, the pain
in my hands and feet and now again
in my head takes all my strength away
I have always been able to work so hard
& accomplish so much & I am becoming
so useless for some reason or other - if
my Jesus would only take me home -
sometimes I can hardly go on & I can not
tell anyone but you - & often I feel I
should not tell you cause I don't want
to worry you - before this old war started
my Jesus asked me many times if I were
willing to do penance & to suffer in my
body to atone for the sins committed
he has said many things to me and one
was that I should pray for his chosen
ones (priests) because many did not
realize their high calling & their power
& thus their sins and neglect many
souls were plunged into hell - some-
times it was awful I never dreamed
a priest could forget God so much -
but I guess being humans they do forget

I pray & pray for priests & I wish I were
a thousand men so I could suffer that
much more & help them — May God
guide & help them & give them strength
to resist temptation — I think it is
a terrible sin to try & make a priest
out of a boy who has no vocation —
& there are many without vocations
in the priesthood — that is ~~where~~ much
of the trouble comes in

Father, why am I such a calf? ²
Sometimes I feel I can stand no more, yet
when my Jesus comes I tell him I am
willing to suffer anything, anything
for his honor & glory just so others love
him — and I am so absolutely unworthy
of his love or attentions — oh, father
don't stop praying for me — I have
offended God so much — why have
I ever fallen so low — when he has
always been so good to me — if he had
only taken me home years ago —
How I am weak and lazy sometimes

I am so weak I feel as if I can no longer live - my body becomes so heavy and even a hypodermic needle feels as heavy as a crow-bar I don't know what is wrong with me unless that old disease is getting the best of me I want to cry tonight, because I am so tired or rather it is I am Sunday you will pray hard for me so God gives me just a little more strength I have never been quite so tired before

In clearing up last night I ran across a picture of my two fathers I will show them to you the next time I go to see you - do you know that the beauty of heaven shone from your eyes the last time I saw you father? How you must love God to look like that Isobel is most discouraged - the trial comes up next Thursday - pray very hard for her - and also for me cause she expects me to be the star witness - I don't like it - but I don't let her down I thank God that you are my father I in spirit I humbly kiss your feet I pray -

Mon. 130 a.m.

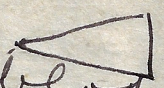
Postmark Oct 23-1944

Father dear, Will you listen very carefully to what I tell you this morning - I don't know how to start or just what today but this is what happened yesterday a.m. after church. I don't know just what is wrong with me but I am so tired that at times I can scarcely live - Just feel as if I must die - Mrs. P. asked me yesterday a.m. why I won't give in and ask your lawyer friend to pay my debts and help me a little - due to conditions here I have been eating at her house twice daily and due to her conditions building marital troubles etc I have been in a turmoil since coming to her house - I have never been in such a mess before - now she wants me to live in her house with her - wants to give me her bedroom but I know it will not work out she has only three rooms and altho they are large she likes her home to herself just as I do - if she were more settled I would leave her - but I cannot desert her now - she needs me badly - for many reasons - this a.m. or rather yesterday she said - I am going to write to Fr. A. & tell him the condition you are in and ask him if his lawyer friend would help you - I told her no - she said, "I will feed & house you and take care of you as long as I can" - but I don't want this, and as for your lawyer friend, I don't feel I can take anything from him cause I really am not good like you think I am - I would be a deceitful hypocrite if I accepted his help without his knowing

how bad I am - I told her not to write you but she
may decide to do so regardless of me - before I would
even want you to do anything for me I have decided
to write you all the badness of my life - my mis-
management of my money, my incompetence, my utterly
worthless self as I must appear before God -

When I was a little kid my angel used to tell me
to do penance to appease the anger of God - he used
to talk to me all the time and teach me how
to love God and appease his divine justice -
I know that the saints wore hair cloth & did penances
and without any help or guidance I tried to imitate
them - I spared myself in no way cause I thought
my Jesus wished it that way - one of the things
I did was to wear a knotted franciscan cord around
my waist. I used to put it pretty tight, so the knots
would hurt and as I removed it for bathing I would have
to pull the knots free from my skin as they
buried holes in my flesh, then the serum would
run - they were never infected & there was
no disagreeable odor - when I went to the convent
I had to tell my mistress, I burned up my hair^{clit}
and cord etc & started a p.c.c. life - but there other
things began and my Jesus inflicted the punishment
himself - there is no use to tell you any more
but he used to ask me to give myself to him
as a victim to satisfy for my own and the sins
of the world - I could not see him suffer without

giving myself to suffer with him - I loved him very
much because he was my Jesus and my all - and
I was all his. he was awfully close in those days -
the day mother abbess scolded me so terribly in chapter
I had a hemorrhage, from my heart the Dr. said
but that was nonsense cause people dont bleed
from their heart (at least I dont think they do) but my
Jesus told me then that if I were willing I would be
crucified with him, he showed me my life and
I accepted all. but father altho he told me I would
be persecuted & thrown out into the world I did not
believe such a thing would happen - I was very
sick for years and the more God did for me the
more I suffered - he used to tell me that it was
useless for the community to pray for my recovery,
in his own good time he would cure me -
he used to talk to me all the time and come to
me and work hundreds of miracles for me, he
used to tell me many things to come - I guess I
had the gift of prophecy - before I left the convent
he came and told me that he was going to leave me
but he would always be close and he would always
love me - & he asked me if I would be faithful
to him - well, I used to make many rash promises
I'm telling you all this so you will know why I
cant get well now - at the start of the war he
begged me to give myself to him, to suffer with
him - one day he asked me to give him my
hands and my feet then that awful disease

set in at first the marks on my feet were
purple triangles like this  then they
gradually turned to a red blotch of many
shades from reds to purple - then they
disappeared and left two depressions and
I had pink & white starry blotches in
the centers of my hands - they are gone now
cause I had fr. Dave beg God to take them ^{away}
now where my feet hurt in the centers
a burning hot spot makes itself felt - I think
they are wearing me out father - then my
Jesus asked me if I would give him my eyes
that was awfully hard but finally I said
yes - father, I don't know what to think I truly
hope our dearest Lord is not going to put
me down again - I want to work & save
my own living-people get tired of having
quiggles around - & I know ^{the} ~~dear~~ will work
many times I was not around - I would like
to live in a cave away from everyone -
please pray hard for me cause I feel a crisis
is coming - & if she will do nothing without
letting me talk to you - would you not rather
forget me and throw me over board as soon
as I give you that picture - I am not worth
troubling with - humbly, Mary ^{I didn't mean}
_{to write so much}

Tuesday Evening
Oct 24, 1944

Dear Father,

Has it only been a week since I saw you? It seems ages, but I sternly denied myself the pleasure this week.

Because I wanted to + because Father Madden so sincerely wants me to come and see him, I went yesterday. I enjoyed the visit + he assured me I had given him a happy morning. Before I left I went to confession because it is very hard for me to go more than a week without that grace. At my request he gave me the same penance you have been giving me so nothing has been upset.

During the past week I have gone through all my notes + letters of the last three years (I mean my spiritual notes + the letters returned to me by request from my Director). Some I destroyed because they were repetitions or unimportant - others because of personal notes too personal for any eyes but those originally intended. I burned all those this morning. The rest I have in fairly good order + if you'd like to go through them I'll leave them with you. You may "enjoy" them as I can see they are the story of a soul in its ascent of Mt. Carmel. There is the mystical - the love - the night of the senses - the constant urge of love - the falls + the problems. Of course I'd

2.

be happy if you read them as you'd know my
soul even better. I don't feel there is any necessity
to, however. It's purely up to you.

In a very few days I shall mail you my
current note-book as I hope to see you next
Tuesday morning if you will allow. I'll call
you beforehand, of course. In the note-book
you will read the intense interior life I have
been leading. By the way, will you please ask
Our Lord if it be His will to help me handle
physically what I am experiencing spiritually.
I'm really having a very severe time + I'm being
physically completely worn out. I don't mind, but
I do feel needed here + if I go down unless a
miracle occurs it will go very hard on my
family, materially, morally + spiritually. Then, too,
my nerves are only a taught worn thread + it's
so very hard to even be patient. Talk to Him
about it, will you? And whatever He wills
I already accept it.

There is certainly one question I want to ask
you when I see you and that is about the fact that
I know + feel + understand that things go on in
my soul that I do not comprehend. I stand aside
and watch, as it were, a drama going on that
I do not understand. At prayer it happens, + all
the time I feel acted upon + still do not understand
the "how" nor the "why". In other words I can't even
tell you what happens, other than some of my reactions,

because I have no idea myself what happens. (Please excuse the tear on the last page, as this tablet is stubborn + I'm really too tired to write it all over again.). Some of my explanations of things I want to know sound like examples of contradictions. But that's just it - there are no words. There never were + it fastidiously exasperates me that I can't explain myself. You alone have understood my ramblings entirely. One priest told me I was as easy to understand as the Apocalypse (spelt right?) + I see what he meant. I have read many mystical writers + it makes perfect sense until I try to apply it to myself. I get more from your personal explanations than I could ever get out of a book, unless you take the book + apply it to me - then I see.

From my last few letters you can see that I, as you put it, have found you "human" + "humane". I am talking to you more freely + less reserved + afraid. Don't worry I'll never go beyond the bounds of your rule or your own high ideals. If you don't smile at that last sentence I'm sorry I wrote it - I meant it in fun. Believe me I understand rules + conventions etc. I spent 12 years in a convent + have known many order priests well. None of it is new to me, only your Cistercians seem "old world" in some of your ways. So next time I'll try very hard not "to make faces" + to be a lady. There is nothing stilted about my manners + maybe I'm disconcerting at times, but blame only

me, as I was brought up very properly - for an American girl: Nice girls all over the world think the same inside + have the same intentions. It is only our exterior that is different. I have always wanted the open freedom of a man + like St Teresa "the fact that I'm a woman is enough to make my sails droop". She said that was ample to keep her humble - that she was a woman.

I've told you little about my soul in this letter. Father, I'm simply not up to it. It has been either terrible suffering or intense nearness of Almighty God - No "in-betweens" + I'm worn body + soul. You'll get it all by mail soon, so in the meantime keep me close to the Sacred Heart of my Saviour. Give me to Him. Press me ever closer so that I may become one with It, both that I may give Him glory + that I may be freed from this Purgatory. We pray for the dead in Purgatory. Why not the living?

Yes, I pray for you constantly, pray for you + with you.

Obediently in Christ

Agnes.

Wed 1.15 am. Postmark Oct 25 - 1944

Father dear, you know I am just an old worry-
wart and you shouldn't pay any attention to
me - please forgive me for bothering you
so much - I just can't get settled because of
certain conditions - just ask our dearest Lord to
straighten things out for me and then I shall
be all right - I am writing this am. because
I want you to pray awfully hard - tomorrow
at 2³⁰ the trial comes off - just beg our
divine master to let all go well - so poor
Isabel gets her freedom - if she does not I
don't know what will happen - surely God
will hear our united prayers (2³⁰ Thursday after-
noon -)

I don't know what to tell you this am.
but I know that I shall write you no more
nonsense - I believe the bad one, just does
those things to disturb me and take my
mind away from God - so from now on,
I shall throw myself into the arms of
God's mercy and just snuggle up close
to his sacred heart and if you are fooled
dear father, it will just be your own fault

I would truly love to be good and very
pleasing to God just to make him happy
but since I am too dumb, then I shall
glory in the radiance of his loving heart
and since he chose me as his spouse
I can claim a little of that radiance
with out being dishonest - just ^{as} an earthly
spouse would give his bride anything to make
her happy, so in time, I'll win my Jesus
back so he will love me very much and
be willing to give me anything I ask - until
then I shall bask in the sunshine of
his love - just beg him to give me
courage father, so I am not such a sheep
I have wanted to cry for almost a week
the pains in my hands and feet are
almost more than I can bear and the
sharp pain is back in my head - it is
often so severe that I fear a stroke - these
pains make me so weak - I offer a great
deal for your intuition - and beg our
sweet Jesus to help you and make
us love him more and more - how sweet
he is to give you to me, not only as

my father but also as my brother!

I thank him with all my heart — and
I thank you — for that great honor —

We must be brave and pray hard
for each other because the way is
rough and thorny and those who follow
our crucified Lord have much to endure
some crosses are very, very hard to bear
and our Jesus is a master at ^{thinning} ~~thinning~~
them up — Our dear Lady understands her
son and she will temper all our sorrows
she will not let us suffer too much —

It came to my mind a few minutes
before when I had seen your Blessed
Mother picture — when I was about 7 yrs
old I used to go every afternoon to visit
our Lord in the Tabernacle — to make the
stations and say the rosary — I used
to see our Lady up by the Tabernacle
with baby Jesus in her arms just as
she is in that picture — she had no
color, was just luminous — I never told
anyone but went back day after day
to see them —

I had a lovely confessor - whenever I
saw him I used to run to him and he
used to pick me up in his arms and
kiss me and talk to me of our Lady &
her sweet baby - he later became

Bishop of Winnipeg - I think he was
very holy - I told him once I believe -

May God bless and help you my
dearest father -

Don't forget Isabel at 230 pm
tomorrow and please pray for your unworthy
Mary -

J. M. J.

OLA, Manteno, Ill.
Feast of Christ,
the King, Oct. 29, '44

My dear Spiritual Father:

While things are quiet, and while I am in good dispositions I decided to write you. I will begin by acknowledging my weakness and tell you what an ungenerous child of God I have been. All the resolutions and promises of which I wrote you, none of which I now remember, have been crashed through, and I have successively failed and so miserably that I am now at the point where it seems to me I no longer possess any virtue. Far different now is my attitude to what it formerly was when in my spiritual pride I was so satisfied with myself. I should have written you a couple weeks ago, but I was in such a state I could do nothing, having to live was about as much as I could endure. Then with the interior difficulties I was enduring various exterior troubles loomed up and I was so oppressed, I really yielded to disheartenment, not to the point of giving up for I would never allow myself to make a decision when disturbed - but I yielded to the point of saying I had had my fill. Now as I can calmly look back over it all, I know the difficulty lies with myself, my want of patience and forbearance, and my want of submission to God.

Yesterday we had our monthly recollection day, and today Exposition all day in our chapel - that is until 4:30 this afternoon. While I was kneeling before the Blessed Sacrament this morning God let me see myself somewhat as I am, especially the cause of my failures - self. I prided myself on my strength of will and ability to do, and when I could not do the things I wanted I still persisted. Today at last, He caught me up in the meshes of His love, and I promised Him: "To make His interests, His desires, His will, His glory, mine and He in turn will make His mine." In child-like trust I confided myself to Him, promising to remain passive in His hands for as long as it shall please Him. On the strength of what I have been told it is apparent what He now desires is not activity, but passivity, am I not right? Be certain to tell me if I am mistaken in this, or if you think differently. Henceforward, I am determined to exercise myself in self-forgetfulness and zeal for His glory in serving others. Self must be humiliated and annihilated if He is to reign supreme in my soul. May He help me in this my promise to Him today, and please lend me the support of your holy prayers that I may keep faithful to Him always. It is when I lose sight of Him that I fall so miserably, and I now know it was because of my self-interest and self-will that I have failed, and failed, and failed! I was occupied with self and not with God. I am certain of this.

Now that He has let me see and put me back on the right path, may He help me to walk firmly and perseveringly on the secure path of love - a love that knows and counts no cost too great - until I shall be united - made one with Him. I so long for this union, and I wonder if it will ever come - I grow impatient waiting and yet He is so patient with me. Beg Him not to tarry long. I need Him that I may not wander again from Him. Recommend my needy soul to Him, I should not dare to hope for so great a grace, because of my infidelities, and yet I do, - again there are times when all hope is gone. I count on the support of your prayers, and be assured of mine. Your spiritual child,

Sister Mary

When you have time - may I hope
to hear from you?
Jm.

1130 Fri - night

Postmark
Oct 31 - 1944

Dearest Father

Isobel plans on writing you, possibly this evening so I thought I would drop you a few lines and get ahead of her - please let me have something to say and do not agree to any plans for me - She is so good to me & wants to do so much for me but I know her circumstances - her mental and physical condition and it would be unfair to her as well as to me to make any definite plans for the future - I hope our sweet Jesus makes you understand - and believe me it is not an ungrateful spirit which prompts me to write - I'm just being peculiar - as long as I am in the world I want my freedom -

I just couldn't pray for you this evening at 9 p.m. so I begged my Jesus to accept my pain and sickness for your intention. I asked him to please help you and to make it easy for you - - and to bless and help your boys -

the divine teacher of souls will help
you in his own good time —

I am ashamed to write this evening
because I hurt my Jesus so much yester-
day — it was my day off — I ~~was~~ slept
but woke about 7⁴⁵ am. By hurrying
I might have been able to receive Him
in holy Com. for various foolish reasons
I felt I could not make it — All day
and all night I could not get over it
Yesterday afternoon I was suddenly
taken ill so I could not work last
night today I have been almost prostrated
from the pain in my hands and feet
What can a lazy worthless creature
like I am do to please God? I long for
him till my heart almost breaks
then I was too lazy to crawl out of bed
I claim to love him, how foolish
I am when one holy Com. could make
me as great as any saint in heaven
Verily, it would make me like to
Jesus cause his precious blood would
be flowing in my veins — father,

what is the matter with me
when God is so good to me I close
my heart to him — This is one of
the things which hurts until I almost
die — it is far better to receive him
in holy Rom. than to dream that
I see him — I know he will come
back that other way in his own
good time but oh, how I want to
know and love him more and
draw other souls to him — Perhaps
I am queer but I cannot hate any
one, no matter how much evil they
are doing — I want them to change
their ways & learn to love God
I wish my love and my thoughts
had wings so they could fly to
the farthest corners of the world
and so they could penetrate by a
fire of love, all hardened bitter
hearts — father, why am I so helpless
why has God filled my soul with
such burning desires only to let
me be so helpless and lazy?

you know one time a dominican father
got up and denounced me as a lukewarm
tepid soul that God was going
to spit out of his mouth - he said
I was neither good nor bad but just
one of those good for nothing tepid souls
which so disgusted God - & in those
days our dearest Lord used to come to
me and talk to me all the time and
do anything I asked him to do, as usual
how great the miracle - but what
would that father say if he knew me
now! - I have been called an apostate
and every thing terrible but nothing
hurts so much as to know I have
hurt my God - he has been so good
to me - others would have been
saints - had they received all the graces
I have received - oh, pray Lord for
me dear father - } I hope you are
well and that all goes well with
you I haven't been praying very hard
for your intentions but I'll try to
do better soon - I have just been

so awfully tired — but Jesus understands
I just hope he does an awful lot for
you and gives you that land and
good sight and a few other things.
Perhaps baby Jesus will hear my
prayers and give you that place
as an Xmas gift — I want him to
do at least one special thing for me

Isabel's divorce was postponed — the
lawyer was ill Thursday so please
keep on praying —

I haven't any news and haven't
worked on my picture but I hope
to finish it by the 21st

please don't make any agreement
with Isabel about my moving in with
her — she loves her home & I love
mine if I had one — so that's that
when the picture is finished

perhaps some of your boys could
pick it up in station wagon

Mr. D. will take me out with
if they cannot come for it —
Thank you for all your holy prayers & father
humbly, your unworthy, waver

(1.30 a.m.) Sat.

Can you read my
writing? say the time
I cannot make it out
myself, father — I'll
print if you like —



Half. 1000 08.1

Father I am very ill temp
almost 102 now. I took Sulfa
drug to reduce it — I have no
cold — this are all yesterday &
thursday I thought I would not
be able to stand any more
just our dearest Lord's five
wounds wretched suffer that
I am — I can't write more
please pray Lord for me
again I must impose on
poor good Isobel please
forgive me if I have said
anything wrong or in any
way offended you and God
your unworthy sister
& child Mary

enclosed a picture
of my very dear father
it's a very poor one he
has the face of an angel
with the love & kindness of God